

1 The present invention is preferably implemented using a programmed
2 processor executing programming instructions that are broadly described above in
3 flow chart form. However, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the processes
4 described above can be implemented in any number of variations and in many
5 suitable programming languages without departing from the present invention. For
6 example, the order of certain operations carried out can often be varied, and
7 additional operations can be added without departing from the invention. Error
8 trapping can be added and/or enhanced and variations can be made in user
9 interface and information presentation without departing from the present invention.
10 Such variations are contemplated and considered equivalent.

11 While the invention has been described in conjunction with specific
12 embodiments, it is evident that many alternatives, modifications, permutations and
13 variations will become apparent to those skilled in the art in light of the foregoing
14 description. Accordingly, it is intended that the present invention embrace all such
15 alternatives, modifications and variations as fall within the scope of the appended
16 claims.

17 What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of providing a customized startup page for an Electronic Program
2 Guide, comprising:
3 receiving a request for the startup page from a Set Top Box associated with
4 a user;
5 finding a user profile corresponding to the user in a user database;
6 generating a link to content based upon the user profile; and
7 generating the startup page comprising at least the link to content.

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9 2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the content comprises a web site.

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11 3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the content comprises a television
12 program source.

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14 4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the user profile comprises
15 location information.

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17 5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the user profile comprises
18 programming preferences of the user.

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20 6. The method according to claim 1, wherein the generating comprises
21 querying a plurality of databases to obtain a plurality of links based upon the user
22 profile.

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1 7. The method according to claim 6, wherein at least one of the databases is
2 accessed via the Internet.

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4 8. The method according to claim 6, wherein at least one of the databases is
5 updated via periodic contact with a remote server accessed via the Internet.

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7 9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the request for the startup page
8 from a Set Top Box is received from a web browser program residing on the Set
9 Top Box.

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11 10. The method according to claim 1, wherein the startup page comprises an
12 HTML document populated with at least the link to content.

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1 11. An apparatus for generating an Electronic Program Guide startup Hub page
2 for a Set Top Box, comprising:
3 means for receiving an HTTP request from the Set Top Box;
4 a user database storing a user profile;
5 a Hub generating program that receives the HTTP request and generates a
6 query of the user database to retrieve the user profile from the user database;
7 the Hub generating program generating a query of a site database for
8 information associated with the user profile; and
9 the Hub generating program generating a Hub page by populating an HTML
10 document with the information.

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12 12. The apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising means for sending
13 the Hub page to the Set Top Box.

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15 13. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the user profile contains
16 location information.

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18 14. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the user profile contains user
19 preferences.

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21 15. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the information includes links
22 to content selected based upon the user profile.

1 16. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the hub page comprises a
2 template selected from a plurality of available templates based upon the user
3 profile, and wherein the template is populated with links determined from the user
4 profile.

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6 17. The apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising a remote database
7 wherein the remote database is accessed via the Internet, and wherein the Hub
8 generating program generates a query of the remote database for information
9 associated with the user profile.

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11 18. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the site database is updated
12 via periodic contact with a remote server accessed via the Internet.

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14 19. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the HTTP request is for a
15 startup page and is received from a web browser program residing on a Set Top
16 Box.

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18 20. The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the information includes a
19 default hub page template selected from a Home page template, a sports page
20 template, a news page template and a children's page template.

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1 21. An apparatus for generating an Electronic Program Guide startup Hub page
2 for a Set Top Box, comprising:
3 means for receiving an HTTP request from the Set Top Box, wherein the
4 HTTP request is for a startup page and is received from a web browser program
5 residing on a Set Top Box;
6 a user database storing a user profile, wherein the user profile contains at
7 least location information, user preferences and a default Hub page template;
8 wherein the default hub page template is selected from a Home page
9 template, a sports page template, a news page template and a children's page
10 template;
11 a Hub generating program that receives the HTTP request and generates a
12 query of the user database to retrieve the user profile from the user database;
13 the Hub generating program generating a query of a plurality of databases
14 for information associated with the user profile, the information comprising links to
15 content;
16 the plurality of databases comprising at least a remote database wherein the
17 remote database is accessed via the Internet, and a site database that is updated
18 via periodic contact with a remote server accessed via the Internet;
19 the Hub generating program generating a Hub page by populating an HTML
20 document with the information; and
21 means for sending the Hub page to the Set Top Box.
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